

and was ascribed to the malign influence of an enemy exercised by magical powers. Each death then involved at least one murder in revenge and even in these days tribes are known who are exterminating themselves by superstitious retaliations because they consider themselves to be naturally immortal. Impelled to seek a cause for everything that happens they are left to themselves to make the search: and they connect together as cause and effect events which have no relationship whatever to one another.

From similar errors of judgment have proceeded the thousand superstitions that have not only darkened man's intelligence and retarded his progress but have turned him in blind anger against his fellows and have made violence and bloodshed the outstanding features of human history.

But if the past is dark there is light before us. Man can improve himself : he is not merely a completed link in a chain of evolutionary metamorphoses. His reason may be trained to discover more and more accurately the properties of things and the properties of properties : it may be assisted immensely by the accumulation of knowledge. His will may be strengthened by self-discipline. Habits of mind as well as of body may be changed for the better. His advancement has proceeded in the main from the birth of men of originality or "supermen"—sports in the

partes of convention—whose novel
ideas are
gradually adopted, sometimes because
they are
endorsed by reason. but more often
through the
influence of the impulse to imitate. It is
owing to
the possession of this impulse that man
can be
educated : the education of the young
is a special
application of its virtues. the usefulness
of which
will be greater or less according as it is
directed to